

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The remainder of the leader time will be reserved.

The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we will resume consideration of the Homeland Security appropriations bill directly. As I indicated last night, the chairman and ranking member have made substantial progress on the bill. We will continue that progress over the course of today. As we announced yesterday, there will be no rollcall votes during today's session. We do expect amendments to be offered. That will begin shortly—during consideration of the bill this morning. I understand we have some cleared amendments that we may dispose of shortly. I will defer to the chairman for an update. We can begin that process shortly.

Any votes that may be ordered on the pending amendments will be ordered to occur on Monday. Senators should expect more than one rollcall vote during Monday's session. We will say more about the timing of these votes before we close later today.

Again, our goal is to complete this bill on Tuesday or early Wednesday morning. This will require the cooperation of all Senators as we move toward completion of this important legislation. We have made real progress and we will continue to make real progress over the course of the day.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I reiterate what the majority leader has just announced and articulated. We have made progress. I appreciate the cooperation we are getting on both sides. We have gotten to the point where there is absolutely no reason why we cannot finish this bill prior to the time we adjourn for Rosh Hashanah next week.

We will continue to work as we have this week to winnow down the amendments, to have time limits on what amendments need to be offered, and we will work with the majority leader to ensure we can reach that goal. I am confident we can and we will continue to work at it throughout the day and on Monday.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, thank you. I think the progress has been made, and I will also state while the Democratic leader is here, we are making real progress on intelligence reform, both recommendations in terms of the relationship with the executive branch as well as internal organization and reorganization and potential reform there.

A lot of people do not see that much is going on, but we are working throughout the day, each and every day, on what we both have mentioned this morning is very important business that we need to act on before we complete the session.

At this juncture I think we will turn to the chairman.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4567, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4567) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Nelson of Florida amendment No. 3607, to provide funds for the American Red Cross.

Schumer amendment No. 3615, to appropriate \$100,000,000 to establish an identification and tracking system for HAZMAT trucks and a background check system for commercial driver licenses.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 6 minutes as in morning business.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have no objection as long as Senator DURBIN is recognized for a like amount of time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Tennessee is recognized for up to 6 minutes and the Senator from Illinois is recognized for up to 6 minutes.

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the chairman for the time and the leadership.

I simply wish to join our leaders today in remembrance of the tragic events of September 11. As I remember those events, I remember more how clearly our country pulled together in response. September 11 is one of our worst days but it brought out the best in us. It unified us as a country and showed our charitable instincts and reminded us of what we stood for and stand for. It showed that we had the resolve to fight against terrorism. We put partisanship aside in our Government offices. We began to proudly say to the rest of the world, we know what it means to be an American.

The best way we can remember September 11 is to remember why this is an exceptional country. We are the only country in the world that has taken people from so many different backgrounds, which is a great achievement by itself, but an even greater achievement is that we have turned all of that variety and diversity into unity. That unity depends upon a few principles in which we believe: liberty, equal opportunity, individualism.

President Bush has eloquently spoken of the American character since September 11. But we in the Senate have a role to play, too. That is why, with the support of many other Senators on both sides of the aisle, I have been working hard to harness that spirit to help us remember for generations to come what it means to be an Amer-

ican. That means teaching it to our children and to those who become new citizens of our country.

One of the great tragedies of education in this country today is that high school seniors perform worse in American history than in any other subject for which they are nationally tested. That is not right. The assistant Democratic leader, Senator REID, and I proposed legislation last year which passed the Senate without a dissenting vote to create summer academies for outstanding students and teachers in U.S. history. The House still needs to act on this bill.

The Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, and I have introduced legislation that would allow our Nation's report card to test eighth graders and high school seniors on U.S. history, on a pilot State-by-State basis. This will help us know where it is being taught well and where it is not so improvements can be made. Shining the spotlight on these results also encourages school districts to work harder to teach American history and civics as well.

The Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, and I have introduced legislation to preserve the oath of allegiance in its present form, so that oath—to which all new citizens swear on naturalization—is given the same respect as we give to the Pledge of Allegiance, to the national anthem, and to the American flag.

While that legislation is pending in committee, with the support of the chairman, the Senator from Mississippi, the Senate unanimously passed yesterday an amendment to the Homeland Security appropriations bill to prevent the oath from being changed during the next fiscal year while the Senate works its will on the legislation proposed by the Senator from New York and me.

I am also working on a second amendment to that legislation to establish a new foundation that will work with the Office of Citizenship to promote the teaching of English, history, and civics to the soon-to-be new citizens of our country and to other new citizens. We are a nation of immigrants. We are proud of that. We should do our best to help those who are new to our country become thriving members of our society so they can learn our history, learn about citizenship, speak our common language. That will help them on the path to the American dream.

The Senate has been hard at work over the last 2 years to help enshrine the values and history that bind us together as Americans. Nothing could be more important as we remember September 11, as we mourn those we lost, but take pride in what was found, our national unity. The best way to remember September 11 is to remember what it means to be an American.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH). The Senator from Illinois may speak for up to 6 minutes.